

The Pioneering Healthier Communities Project—a partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—brings leaders together to promote cultural and environmental changes in neighborhoods supportive of healthy lifestyles. Each year YMCAs are selected to convene teams of representatives from the government and public health and private sectors to improve healthy living. This year, the YMCAs of Rye and Greater Rochester were selected and convened teams, resulting in creative plans to help youngsters. For example, the Rye YMCA implemented the Fitkids Program to increase healthy menu choices and promote physical activity and healthy eating in four school systems. The YMCA of Greater Rochester introduced the Coordinated Approach to Child Health, CATCH, Program, which promotes physical activity and healthy food choices and prevents tobacco use in children, as well as the Family Cooks Program, which teaches children using a hands-on approach to nutritious cooking.

In addition, YMCAs in greater New York and greater Rochester are participating in the Gulick Project—an initiative that is dramatically improving the way they work with individuals and families to support healthy living. Through the Gulick Project, YMCAs in New York and in other States are enhancing their programs, facilities, and staff to effectively meet the needs of those who want to be active and healthy but continuously stop and start the process. Cutting-edge work at four YMCA branches in Prospect Park, Cross Island, Long Island city and West Side, as well as at other Gulick YMCAs in the Nation, is leading to the development of best practices.

Moreover, YMCAs in New York are actively involved in YMCA Healthy Kids Day, a grassroots event that encourages children and families to adopt and uphold behaviors that support healthy living through fun and engaging activities. Healthy Kids Day recognizes that there is local help for parents, from schools to public libraries and YMCAs. In 2006, more than a half million people will participate in Healthy Kids Day with events in more than 1,300 communities across the country.

New York YMCAs are also engaged in a variety of health initiatives through partnerships with the Steps to a HealthierUS, which offers grants to address health problems like obesity and asthma and risk factors like physical inactivity and poor nutrition. For instance, Broome County YMCA has partnered with the Steps program to develop Mission Meltaway, an 8-week program that educates participants on ways to control weight. This partnership has also established nutrition and physical activity policies for all YMCA afterschool programs. Similarly, the Chautauqua County YMCA has joined with the Steps program to create a wellness resource center and expand a

weight loss management program, among other things. Through the Steps program, the Rockland County YMCA is improving nutritious offerings at snack time in child care programs called “healthy snack Wednesdays.” The Watertown Family YMCA has teamed up with the Steps program to implement Kids NutriFit, a project that will increase physical activity in children ages 5 to 12 by engaging them in traditional play and teaching them about healthy snacking.

Many health problems are linked to habits common in American lifestyles, including overeating, underexercising, and poor diets. YMCAs in New York and their community partners are vigorously promoting healthy lifestyle choices and behaviors through innovative programs. I applaud their hard work and dedication to build healthy families and communities in New York and look forward to continuing to work with them.

As an advocate for strong and healthy children and families, I will continue to fight for increased funding for programs that promote access to healthy food and nutrition education in our schools and communities. Specifically, I have supported Farm-To-Cafeteria programs, which promote using locally grown produce in school cafeterias through community grants, and the USDA Team Nutrition program, which funds coordinated efforts between Federal, State and local entities to offer nutrition education to children. Through my own Farm-to-Fork initiative, I also have been working to get local New York State produce in schools, colleges, and universities. Healthy food options in school cafeterias teach kids about good nutrition and the importance of agriculture, as well as support local farms by keeping food dollars within the community.

Obesity, which has doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, is another serious health issue I am committed to addressing. Last year, I reintroduced the Improved Nutrition and Physical Activity Act, IMPACT Act, that awards grants to train primary care physicians and other health professionals in identifying, treating, and preventing obesity and eating disorders and allows States to use preventive health and health services block grants for activities and community education programs targeting obesity and eating disorders. This bill also promotes funding programs that encourage healthy eating and physical activity and collecting and analyzing data to determine the fitness levels and energy expenditures of children.

I have used nonlegislative avenues to address obesity and eating disorders as well. I wrote an article in the New York Daily News last summer highlighting long-term physical and emotional problems that can result from childhood obesity, such as cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, can-

cer, and depression, not to mention low self-esteem, academic problems, and discrimination. I have urged making childhood obesity a real priority for families, schools, government and businesses and outlined steps to do this, including educating parents and children about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, restoring physical education programs during and after school hours, and enlisting health care professionals to join the antiobesity campaign. Working with the Eating Disorders Coalition, I sponsored a congressional briefing called Schools, Students, Obesity and Eating Disorders to raise awareness of obesity, eating disorders, and physical activity in school-age youth.

I am dedicated to promoting safe and fit lifestyles in our children and to fighting for healthier and stronger communities. Together we can combat the health problems afflicting our youth today and create a better, more promising future. I commend the exemplary efforts of New York YMCAs as they contribute to this mission on many fronts.●

TRIBUTE TO JANET ALTMAN SPRAGENS

● Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, on February 19, 2006, our Nation lost a great lawyer, educator, advocate, and public servant. Janet Altman Spragens was a lifelong resident of Washington, DC, and a professor at American University's Washington College of Law for 33 years.

I met Janet when she was a young graduate student at Northwestern University and taught social studies at my alma mater, Maine South High School in Park Ridge, IL. She was a Wellesley graduate, and as I was making choices about where I would go to college, she urged me to consider Wellesley. I am grateful to Janet for helping me make that important decision in my life.

Janet went on to law school and developed an expertise in tax law. She used that expertise to benefit our Nation's underserved taxpayers by advocating for them in Congress and, in 1990, founding the Federal Tax Clinic. The clinic continues to operate today and the American Bar Association's Tax Section called it one of the earliest and most successful low-income taxpayer clinics in the country.

Janet Altman Spragens made a difference in the lives of many Americans who never will have the pleasure and privilege of knowing her. I join her family and friends in mourning her loss and ask that her obituary in the Washington Post be printed in the RECORD.

The material follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 22, 2006]

JANET SPRAGENS, 62; LAW PROFESSOR SET UP TAX CLINIC TO AID POOR
(By Joe Holley)

Janet R. Spragens, 62, a tax professor at American University's Washington College of Law and the founder of the nation's first tax clinic for low-income taxpayers, died Feb. 19 of cancer at her home in the District.

Ms. Spragens joined the faculty of the Washington College of Law in fall 1973 and founded the Federal Tax Clinic in 1990. Its purpose is to provide third-year law students the opportunity to learn by doing instead of just reading legal theory and to provide assistance to people who frequently are not served well by the legal system.

"Janet came to realize that the tax system is a place where low- and moderate-income taxpayers don't have the resources to protect themselves," said Andy Pike, an associate dean at the law school.

The clinic's clients have included cabdrivers, single working mothers, travel agents, construction workers, retirees, high school teachers, household workers and others who find themselves caught up in the complexity of the nation's administrative and judicial systems. As Ms. Spragens told a House committee in 2001, many are non-English speakers who are frightened and confused. The clinic charges no fees for its services.

Since the clinic was founded, participation in it has been "standing-room only," said its supervising attorney, Nancy Abramowitz, referring both to students and clients. The program's success has spawned others at law schools across the nation.

Born in Washington into a family of lawyers, Ms. Spragens considered becoming a teacher before deciding to pursue a career as a lawyer who taught. She received a bachelor's degree from Wellesley College in 1964 and a master's degree in education from Northwestern University in 1965. She received a law degree from George Washington University Law School in 1968.

As a student teacher during her year at Northwestern, she taught future Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), then a high school senior. In her memoir, "Living History," Clinton credits Ms. Spragens with urging her to broaden her horizons by leaving the Midwest and attending college in the East. Like Ms. Spragens, Clinton chose Wellesley.

During her third year of law school, Ms. Spragens served as a clerk to U.S. District Judge Oliver Gasch. She was an attorney with the appellate section of the Justice Department's tax division before joining the faculty of the Washington College of Law in 1973. At the time, she was the only female member of the full-time faculty.

Federal funding for the tax clinic, thanks to Ms. Spragens' efforts, came about almost accidentally. Testifying in 1997 before the National Commission on Restructuring the Internal Revenue Service, she was asked what could be done to alleviate tax problems confronting the working poor.

"She said, somewhat offhandedly, just provide funds to create more clinics for the provision of services to this needy population across the country," Abramowitz noted. "The rest is history."

Ms. Spragens also was concerned about unethical tax preparers who prey on low-income taxpayers and about the complexities of the earned income tax credit, which is designed to help the working poor. "They are just overwhelmed by the complexity," she told *The Washington Post* in 2001.

Ms. Spragens served as executive director of the American Tax Policy Institute from 1996 to 2001, was a member of the council for the American Bar Association section on taxation since 1999 and had chaired the section's low-income taxpayer and teaching taxation committees. She was director of the Israel program at the Washington College of Law and was visiting professor of law at the University of Haifa Faculty of Law in 2000.

For her work on behalf of low-income taxpayers, she received the 2006 ABA Section on Taxation Pro Bono Award.

Her marriage to Jeffrey Spragens ended in divorce.

Survivors include two daughters, Robin Spragens Trepanier of Washington and Lee Spragens of Los Angeles; her mother, Sophie B. Altman of Washington; two sisters, Susan Altman of Washington and Nancy Altman of Bethesda; and a brother, Robert Altman of Potomac.●

IN HONOR OF ED McNAMARA

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, last week, Michigan lost a distinguished public servant and a visionary leader, and I lost a good friend. Ed McNamara passed away at the age of 79 after a lifetime of service to our State, including 16 years as Wayne County executive and 17 years as mayor of Livonia. He fought relentlessly to make Michigan a better place, and he succeeded in ways small and large. And as he made a difference in the lives of average people, he did so with a sparkle in his eye and humor on his lips.

Ed was an old pol in the best sense of the word. He loved his constituents, he loved serving them, and he made a difference in their lives. Ed brought health care to the poor, saved a countywide bus system, and revitalized the county's parks. He paved the roads, helped save the Rouge River, and made big investments in the people and infrastructure of Southeastern Michigan.

When Ed took office as county executive, Wayne County, which includes the city of Detroit, was facing a \$135 million deficit. Ed quickly eliminated that red ink and revived the county's bond rating as a first step toward the greater revitalization he envisioned. Ed McNamara never stopped believing in Wayne County, and we will be reaping the rewards of that leadership for years to come. Just this month, Detroit hosted the Super Bowl at Ford Field, which Ed helped to build. Last year, Detroit hosted Major League Baseball's All-Star Game at Comerica Park, which Ed helped to build. And visitors to each of these events flew into the Detroit Metro Airport terminal named in his honor, which Ed helped to build.

Ed's legacy will also live on in the many people he has inspired and mentored, including the Governor of Michigan. Like them, I have learned so much from him in the years that I have known him. It has been a joy to know a man of such energy, talent, kindness, and warmth.

Ed's abundant good nature spread hope and opportunity for the multitude that he touched. His life demonstrated what a difference one person can make. He will be greatly missed by the people he loved and led. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Lucille and his children and grandchildren.●

TRIBUTE TO CENTER FOR PROVISIONAL ACCELERATED LEARNING

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Center for Provisional Accelerated Learning, PAL, in San Bernardino, CA. For the past 20

years, the Provisional Accelerated Learning Center has been an outstanding community center for service and support.

The PAL Center was the vision of Dr. Mildred Dalton Henry, a retired professor emeritus from California State University at San Bernardino. In August 1983, Dr. Henry, community resident Alonza Thompson, and other members of the community worked together to establish a community-based learning center.

Today, these PAL Center founders can look back at 20 successful years of community outreach and mentorship that has changed the lives of many. Many students have written about the gratitude and fond memories they hold for the PAL Center and the positive effect it had on their lives.

At the PAL Center, individuals from throughout the community can receive quality educational services and individual life assistance and support. The PAL Center values cultural diversity and strives to assist individuals from all walks of life. In many communities throughout our Nation, troubling situations have forced many individuals to go without the assistance that could change their lives. In San Bernardino, these same individuals can count on the PAL Center to help them plan for and take action to face life's challenges and plan for successful futures.

I applaud the service and dedication of the community heroes at the Center for Provisional Accelerated Learning in San Bernardino. Their efforts have made a lasting impression on their community, and set a standard for our nation. Please join me in honoring them on their 20th anniversary.●

RECOGNIZING THE WILLIAMS INSTITUTE

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am very pleased to take a few moments to recognize the work of The Williams Institute—formerly the Williams Project—on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy at UCLA Law School, as it gathers for its Fifth Annual Update.

Founded 5 years ago with the generous support of Charles R. Williams, the Williams Institute produces substantive scholarship on matters pertaining to sexual orientation law and public policy. The first and only institution of its kind in the United States, the institute produces scholarship on sexual orientation issues through the collaborative efforts of scholars, judges, advocates, and students. Those working for the Williams Institute have published an array of documents ranging from amicus briefs that have proved useful in key court cases to books that have helped legal scholars comprehend the ramifications of a constantly evolving body of law.

Educating members of the legal community in America through continuing legal education, lectures, symposia, classes, and speakers is a critical part